

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 CU-04 DHA-02
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FM AMCONSUL TORONTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5349
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL QUEBEC

UNCLAS TORONTO 0946

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, EGEN, CA

SUBJECT: ONTARIO PREMIER REITERATES OPPOSITION TO ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION

WITH INDEPENDENT QUEBEC

REF: (A) TORONTO 647; (B) TORONTO 915; (C) TORONTO 917

1. ONTARIO PREMIER WILLIAM DAVIS TOLD THE EMPIRE CLUB OF CANADA
IN A LUNCHEON ADDRESS APRIL 21 THAT "IT WOULD BE ABSOLUTELY
FOOLHARDY FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF QUEBEC TO BELIEVE THAT IT COULD
HAVE BOTH INDEPENDENCE AND ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION WITH THE REST
OF CANADA. MOREOVER, I WOULD NOT BE PREPARED TO COMMIT THE
GOVERNMENT OF THIS PROVINCE, AND THE PEOPLE WHOM WE SERVE, TO THAT
KIND OF UNDERSTANDING WITH ANY GOVERNMENT."

2. DAVIS ALSO REPEATED THE THEME HE STATED IN ONTARIO GENERAL
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (REFTEL C) TO THE POINT THAT WHILE BELIEVING
FAIRMINDEDNESS AND AGENUINE SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING WILL PREVAIL
IN TRYING "TO FIND A CREATIVE, JUST AND VIABLE RESOLUTION," THAT
THOSE WHO WOULD CLOSE DOORS, AND DEBATES, AND TERMINATE DISCUSSIONS
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"WOULD BE NAIVE TO BELIEVE THAT THE SAME SPIRIT OF UNDERSTANDING
WILL CONTINUE THEREAFTER." DAVIS CONTINUED "IN THIS REGARD,
I TOOK PARTICULAR OFFENSE, AND SAID SO WHEN I WENT TO THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, AT THE TENOR AND THRUST OF THE ADDRESS OFFERED
TO YOU BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE OF QUEBEC (SEE REFTEL "). I
ASKED RHETORICALLY AND DIRECTLY WHO IS HE AND FOR THAT MATTER WHO IS
ANYONE TO SAY TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY -- TO SAY TO YOU, TO SAY

TO ME, TO SAY TO ANY CANADIAN THAT THE DEBATE IS OVER, THE DIS-
CUSSIONS HAVE ENDED, THE TIME FOR NEGOTIATION HAS PASSED. AS
LONG AS I AM PREMIER OF THIS PROVINCE AND AM ABLE TO SERVE POLITICALLY

THAT KIND OF DEFEATISM WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PROVINCE
OF ONTARIO."

3. PREMIER ALSO USED HIS SPEECH TO DECRY THE SEMANTIC DIFFICULTIES
SURROUNDING DISCUSSION OF THE ECONOMY, THE SIMPLISTIC APPROACH
WHICH WASTES TIME IN ARGUING WHETHER IT IS UNEMPLOYMENT OR INFLATION
WHICH HAPPENS TO BE MORE IMPORTANT, OR MORE SERIOUS AT ANY ONE POINT
IN TIME. HE ALSO REINFORCED HIS GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO FRENCH
LANGUAGE SCHOOL IN ESSEX COUNTY AND STATED "WE WILL SEEK TO ENHANCE,
THROUGH VARIOUS MEASURES, THE SURVIVAL OF A DISTINCT VE,
RICH AND BEAUTIFUL FRANCO-ONTARIAN CULTURE IN THIS PROVINCE. THAT
CULTURE WILL SURVIVE IRRESPECTIVE OF WHAT THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC
MAY OR MAY NOT CHOOSE TO DO EITHER WITH RESPECT TO ITS OWN MINORITIES
OR ITS OWN ULTIMATE POLITICAL STATUS."

4. COMMENT: DAVIS BEGAN HIS REMARKS WITH AN APOLOGY TO THE PRESS
FOR NOT USING THE PLATFORM TO ANNOUNCE A PROVINCIAL ELECTION
AND ALSO FOR NOT ADDRESSING SOME PROVINCE-WIDE POLITICAL ISSUES
IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT "SHOULD WE FIND OURSELVES IN A
PROVINCIAL ELECTION AT SOME EARLY DATE." PREMIER DAVIS OF COURSE
DID MAKE A POLITICAL SPEECH BUT WITH THE OVERRIDING ASPECT BEING
THE BREADTH OF BILL DAVIS IN CONFRONTING THE PROBLEMS WHICH
FACE ONTARIANS AND CANADIANS. AS HE PUT IT, ONTARIANS CAN
BEGIN TO REBUILD THE NATIONAL FABRIC OF THIS COUNTRY "BY ENSURING
THAT POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP IN GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY AND
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LABOR THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT THOSE
(NATIONAL) INSTITUTIONS JUSTIFY THAT FAITH" AND REFERRED TO THE
"JOINT ROLE WE ALL HAVE IN BUILDING WHAT HAS MADE ONTARIO PARTIC-
ULARLY SPECIAL, PARTICULARLY PROSPEROUS AND A PARTICULARLY STABLE
AND SECURE PLACE TO LIVE."
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Disposition Event:
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